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BOOK REVIEWS

Educational Psychology. By EDWARD L. THORNDIKE. In three volumes. Vol. I, "The Original Nature of Man." Pp. 326. Vol. II, "The Psychology of Learning." Pp. 452. Vol. III, "Work and Fatigue, Individual Differences." Pp. 408. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1913.

In these three volumes Professor Thorndike has brought together a very large body of material which will be found useful by all students of education. Vol. I gives a careful and detailed account of all of the inherited modes of behavior of man. There is much incidental discussion also of the meaning and value of instincts in education. Vol. II reviews a large number of the studies which have been made of learning processes and gives a full account of the learning curve, together with a theoretical discussion of the characteristics of this curve. Vol. III repeats in the division which deals with individual differences the work that Professor Thorndike brought out a number of years ago under the title *Educational Psychology*. The first part of the volume, which deals with work and fatigue, summarizes the experiments made by Professor Thorndike and others in this field. Each volume is supplied with a copious bibliography and will be useful to anyone who is looking up the literature of education.

It is difficult to select from three large volumes of this type any particular item for special comment. Perhaps the most interesting development which appears in these volumes is Professor Thorndike's new position on the matter of formal discipline. On pp. 416-17 of the second volume he makes the following extraordinary statements: "These experimental facts as a whole, like those concerning memorizing, leave a rather confused impression on one's mind, and resist organization into any simple statement of how far the improvement wrought by special practice spreads beyond the function primarily exercised. They do, however, at least put out of court the old doctrine of a very wide spread of a very large percentage of the special improvement. Possibly nobody ever really believed that the improvement made in reasoning about Latin syntax would spread equally, or almost equally, to all or nearly all varieties of reasoning; but men wrote as if they believed substantially this. Certainly nobody can now believe it in the face of these experiments."

With regard to the future development of this matter, and especially with regard to his own frequently reiterated doctrine of identical elements, Mr. Thorndike says on p. 417: "Many more measurements of the influence of improvement in certain abilities upon the status of others must be made before psychology will be able to predict in general the disciplinary effect of any special forms of practice such as the 'studies' of schools or the industries and games of modern life. At present only rather vague protections against unwise expectations can be given. The general theory of identical elements—that one ability is improved by the exercise of another only when the neurones whose action the former represents are actually altered in the course of the exercise of the latter—is sound, and is useful in guiding thought. However, so little is known about which neurones are concerned in any ability that this general theory does not carry us far."

The changes in opinion which are represented by these statements on the part of Mr. Thorndike will be of great interest to those who all along have felt that his attack upon formal discipline was a little overdone and that the positive educational teachings which issued from his attack were very meager as contrasted with those which he attempted to overthrow.

C. H. J.

Opportunities for Vocational Training in Boston. Compiled by the Committee on Opportunities for Vocational Training; Edited by THOMAS C. McCracken. Boston: The Women's Municipal League, 1913. Pp. viii+301. \$1.25.

While this volume is published as a handbook of information about the opportunities for obtaining vocational training in and about Boston, it will serve a wider usefulness than its name would imply. The book is suitable for those who are seeking to promote vocational education generally, because it is illustrative of the kind of information which might profitably be collected in any considerable urban community. In this way it serves to stimulate local organizations to study their own communities and to inaugurate practical vocational courses, not only in the public schools, but in social settlements, and in the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations. It also will promote home study of vocations. The volume contains a classification of vocational subjects now being taught in educational institutions, which renders it especially valuable as a reference book for students of vocational education and vocational guidance. The book is therefore commended to the attention of teachers, parents, employers, ministers, social workers, and especially to organizations planned to exercise vocational guidance in any of its phases.

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The Fundamental Basis of Nutrition. By GRAHAM LUSK. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1914. Pp. 62.

This book is a brief popular account of some of the scientific facts with regard to nutrition and diet. It is the work of one of the best experimental physiologists in this country and will serve admirably as a text for a part of the class exercises in home economics in high school or in the upper grades of the elementary school. It is written in a popular style and yet, at the same time, explains clearly some of the scientific terms which are used by the physiologists and dietitians.

After a brief historical introduction, there is a chapter on the constant need of fuel. In this chapter comparative tables are reported showing the amount of fuel which is used by different classes of people and the reason for these variations. Then follows a chapter on the constant need of protein. In this chapter the special importance of the protein elements is pointed out. Then follows a brief chapter on habits of diet, showing again how different peoples under different circumstances cultivate different diets. The evil effects of a one-sided diet are discussed in the following chapter, and, finally, a series of comparative tables sets forth the monetary value of foods. This discussion is followed by a bibliography which gives references to the best literature on the subject.

C. H. J.